

MINUTES
LAURENS COUNTY COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 25, 2014 – 5:30 P.M.
HISTORIC COURTHOUSE – COUNTY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - PUBLIC SQUARE

ATTENDANCE: **COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT** - County Council Chairman Jim Coleman and Vice Chairman Edward McDaniel; Council Members, Diane Anderson, David Pitts, Ted Nash, Keith Tollison and Joe Wood.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF: Laurens County Administrator, Ernest Segars; Laurens County Clerk to Council, Betty C. Walsh and Sandy Cruickshanks, Laurens County Attorney.

ATTENDING - LAURENS COUNTY DEPARTMENT HEADS: Laurens County Public Works Director, Scott Holland; Lisa Kirk, Director, Laurens County Finance; Debi Parker, Manager of Human Resources; Ricky Chastain, Laurens County Sheriff; Cindy Burke, Laurens County Treasurer; Chuck Bobo, Building Codes Officer.

PRESS: The *Laurens County Advertiser*, Corey Engle; Vic McDannald, Clinton Chronicle; Iva Cadmus, WLBG-Radio and GoLaurens Representative.

GUEST SPEAKERS: Mr. Phil Astwood, Representing the Carolina Association For Passenger Trains; Gary Cook and Tom McNeish Representatives from Elliott Davis, CPA and Laurens County 4H Club Teen Council Members with 4H Coordinator, Katie Shaw.

SCHEDULED SESSION AGENDA ITEMS – **(1)** Approval of Agenda, February 25, 2014; **(2)** Approval of Minutes from the February 11, 2014 Regular Session; **(3.)** Presentation of the Fiscal Year 2012 / 2013 Financial Statement Elliott Davis, Tom McNeish, CPA Shareholder and Gary Cooke, CPA; **(4.)** Resolution #2014-01 (RE: City of Laurens) - “A Resolution of Laurens County Council to Apply, Assign, Allocate And Transfer Funds Generated Pursuant To Intergovernmental Agreement; And Other Matters Related Thereto”; **(5)** Resolution #2014-02 (RE: Piedmont Tec – parking lot) “A Resolution of Laurens County Council to Apply, Assign, Allocate And Transfer Funds Generated Pursuant Intergovernmental Agreement; And Other Matters Related Thereto”; **(6)** Requested Resolution #201403 - “A Resolution in Support of Transportation Options For the State of South Carolina” – Mr. Phil Astwood, Carolinas Association For Passenger Trains; **(7)** Approval of a review process for the selection of a firm to perform the FY2014 audit for the County; **(8)** Administrative Report – Ernie Segars, County Administrator; **(9)** 6:00 P.M. (time approximate), Public Comment, Fifteen Minute Period (not to exceed five minutes per topic) **(10)** Comments from Council Members; **(11)** Adjournment.

MEETING NOTIFICATION - The County Council Members, Press and requested public notifications were informed of the meeting in a timely and appropriate manner.

CALL TO ORDER – Chairman Coleman called the February 25, 2014 regular scheduled meeting of Council to order at 5:30 P.M. in the Council Chambers of the Laurens County Historic Courthouse.

Chairman Coleman invited the Laurens County 4H Teen Council to come forward to lead the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the invocation provided by Councilman Wood.

Chairman Coleman asked for the representatives of the Teen Council to introduce themselves – Thomas McClain from Ware Shoals; Audrey Hall from Gray Court and Joy Pilgrim from Gray Court.

APPROVAL – AGENDA – FEBRUARY 25, 2014 – Upon a MOTION from COUNCILMAN TOLLISON and a SECOND from COUNCILMAN NASH; the agenda was approved with no deletions or additions; VOTE 7-0.

APPROVAL – MINUTES – FEBRUARY 11, 2014 – REGULAR SESSION OF COUNCIL – Upon a MOTION from COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON and a SECOND from VICE CHAIRMAN MCDANIEL, the minutes from the February 11, 2014 meeting was approved as presented; VOTE 7-0.

TABLE PRESENTATION – Chairman Coleman called upon Dennis Satterfield to approach Council with his donation to the County of a table made from one of the old oak trees that was removed from around the Courthouse. Mr. Satterfield also provided Council with a bowl made from the oak trees.

Mr. Satterfield said that while cutting up the trees into workable sizes, he hit a section that consisted of an embedded mule shoe. The location of the mule shoe was during the early years of the tree growth. Mr. Satterfield did not present that part of the tree with the mule shoe because he was waiting on someone to determine if he still wanted to stake claim on it.

FISCAL YEAR ENDING 2013 AUDIT REVIEW – ELLIOTT DAVIS, CPA – Speaking on behalf of the Elliott Davis Firm, Mr. Gary Cooke introduced Mr. Tom McNeish and proceeded with the audit review.

Mr. Cooke said, “As you all can see we have a clean audit. We are responsible for the preparation of your financial statements as per accounting principles as it relates to internal control. Our firm expresses our opinions based on the findings from your financial statements towards the risks of misstatements and accounting policies used. In our opinion your financial statements are fairly represented. The annual report presented to you is statements in four (4) parts – government financial, fund financial, governmental funds and fiduciary funds”.

Referring to page three (3) Councilman Pitts asked for Mr. Cooke to please review the “Financial Highlights”.

Mr. Cooke reviewed the following - Financial Highlights:

- 1.) The County’s assets exceeded its liabilities as of June 30, 2013 by \$71.3 million (net position). Of this amount \$64.2 million is net investment in capital assets, \$9.8 million is restricted for capital, debt service, contingency and public safety; and, with an unrestricted deficit of \$2.7 million.
- 2.) The County repaid \$1.6 million of bond and financing lease payables during the year with no new debt being issued during the year.
- 3.) During the year, the County’s general fund balance decreased by \$913 thousand. The general fund actual revenues were \$742 thousand less than budgeted and general fund expenditures were \$536 thousand less than budgeted.

Councilman Tollison questioned the comment no new debt and that he was of the opinion that equipment purchases were made during this time. Chairman Coleman replied that some of those purchases were in the Fiscal Year purchases. Councilman Tollison then stated that equipment has been bought almost every year. Mr Cooke replied that a master lease was issued right before year end of 2012 with proceeds left over.

Mr. Cooke then moved on to page twelve (12) Balance Sheet:

Exhibit 3 - Balance Sheet - Governmental Funds

	General	Rural Fire	Center Capital Project	Governmental Funds	Governmental Funds
Assets					
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 25,808,208	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 547,287	\$ 26,355,495
Cash and cash equivalents, restricted	289,638	-	-	-	289,638
Investments	3,183,754	-	-	-	3,183,754
Property taxes receivable - Net	770,270	156,110	-	95,394	1,021,774
Accounts receivable	1,523,618	31,350	-	107,472	1,662,440
Prepaid items	138,325	-	-	-	138,325
Due from other governments	2,755,202	-	-	-	2,755,202
Due from other funds	51,467	122,053	-	1,937,605	2,111,125
Total assets	\$ 34,520,482	\$ 309,513	\$ -	\$ 2,687,758	\$ 37,517,753

Liabilities and Fund Balances

Liabilities

Accounts payable	\$ 1,135,374	\$ 23,878	\$ -	\$ 308,309	\$ 1,467,561
Accrued wages and benefits	796,458	-	-	-	796,458
Unavailable revenue	687,335	141,395	-	85,576	914,306
Due to other funds	2,059,658	-	51,467	-	2,111,125
Due to other taxing districts and agencies	19,529,357	-	-	-	19,529,357
Total liabilities	24,208,182	165,273	51,467	393,885	24,818,807

Fund balances

Nonspendable	138,325	-	-	-	138,325
Restricted					
Capital activity	1,536,363	-	-	-	1,536,363
Public safety	-	144,240	-	1,946,012	2,090,252
Economic development	-	-	-	5,000	5,000
Debt service	-	-	-	342,861	342,861
Contingency	6,073,148	-	-	-	6,073,148
Assigned	1,610,582	-	-	-	1,610,582
Unassigned (deficit)	953,882	-	(51,467)	-	902,415
Total fund balances	10,312,300	144,240	(51,467)	2,293,873	12,698,946
Total liabilities and fund balances	\$ 34,520,482	\$ 309,513	\$ -	\$ 2,687,758	\$ 37,517,753

Administrator Segars questioned if the Council decided not to fund specific projects, could those funds be dropped back to the unassigned funds? Mr. Cooke replied that it could because the part is not established by ordinance.

Referring to page fourteen (14), Mr. Cooke reviewed revenues and expenditures as follows:

Exhibit 5 - Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balances

	General	Rural Fire	Detention Center Capital Project	Nonmajor Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds
REVENUES					
Taxes	\$ 14,110,734	\$ 2,250,529	\$ -	\$ 1,807,990	\$ 18,169,253
Licenses and permits	420,341	93,980	-	-	514,321
Intergovernmental revenue	13,031,190	-	-	681,593	13,712,783
Charges for services	7,040,392	-	-	-	7,040,392
Interest and investment income	32,261	-	294	1,990	34,545
Miscellaneous revenue	75,989	-	-	96,852	172,841
Total revenues	34,710,907	2,344,509	294	2,588,425	39,644,135
EXPENDITURES					
General government	15,287,753	-	-	-	15,287,753
Public safety	12,508,575	1,792,290	357,630	1,405,338	16,063,833
Public works	3,395,291	-	-	-	3,395,291
Health and welfare	243,860	-	-	-	243,860
Culture and recreation	745,520	-	-	-	745,520
Intergovernmental	422,684	-	-	-	422,684
Economic development	2,675,615	-	-	607,098	3,282,713
Debt service:					
Principal retirement	316,285	330,415	-	972,289	1,618,989
Interest and fiscal charges	28,782	69,345	-	257,165	355,292
Total expenditures	35,624,365	2,192,050	357,630	3,241,890	41,415,935
Excess (deficit) of revenues over (under) expenditures	(913,458)	152,459	(357,336)	(653,465)	(1,771,800)
Other financing sources (uses):					
Proceeds from sale of capital assets	-	6,588	-	-	6,588
Insurance recoveries	-	-	-	675,969	675,969
Transfers in	-	246,759	-	187,475	434,234
Transfers out	-	(187,475)	-	(246,759)	(434,234)
Total other financing sources (uses)	-	65,872	-	616,685	682,557
Net change in fund balances	(913,458)	218,331	(357,336)	(36,780)	(1,089,243)
Fund balances (deficits), beginning of year	11,225,758	(74,091)	305,869	2,330,653	13,788,189
Fund balances(deficits), end of year	\$ 10,312,300	\$ 144,240	\$ (51,467)	\$ 2,293,873	\$ 12,698,946

Mr. Cook then moved on to discuss page twenty seven (27) – Capital Assets for year end June 30, 2013 as follows:

	Balance June 30, 2012	Increases	Decreases	Transfers	Balance June 30, 2013
Governmental Activities					
Capital assets not being depreciated					
Land	\$ 870,315	\$ 2,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,870,315
Construction in progress	6,279,639	2,990,484	-	(9,270,123)	-
Total capital assets at historical cost not being depreciated	7,149,954	4,990,484	-	(9,270,123)	2,870,315
Capital assets being depreciated					
Buildings	19,100,400	128,592	-	5,908,695	25,137,687
Vehicles and equipment	15,832,314	1,130,805	(796,420)	452,365	16,619,064
Infrastructure	110,922,107	19,220	-	2,909,063	113,850,390
Total capital assets at historical cost being depreciated	145,854,821	1,278,617	(796,420)	9,270,123	155,607,141
Less accumulated depreciation for:					
Buildings	(6,694,551)	(537,086)	-	-	(7,231,637)
Vehicles and equipment	(9,284,546)	(1,326,008)	754,828	-	(9,855,726)
Infrastructure	(60,602,042)	(3,669,972)	-	-	(64,272,014)
Total accumulated depreciation	(76,581,139)	(5,533,066)	754,828	-	(81,359,377)
Total capital assets being depreciated, net	69,273,682	(4,254,449)	(41,592)	9,270,123	74,247,764
Governmental activities capital assets, net	<u>\$ 76,423,636</u>	<u>\$ 736,035</u>	<u>\$ (41,592)</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 77,118,079</u>

Depreciation expense was charged to the following functions:

General Government	\$ 342,177
Public Safety	1,511,177
Public Works	3,604,094
Health and Welfare	35,042
Culture and Recreation	40,576
Total Governmental Activities	
Depreciation Expense	<u>\$ 5,533,066</u>

During the year ended June 30, 2013, the Ekom Fire Department experienced a loss due to fire, resulting in the loss of County capital assets totaling approximately \$344,000, with a net book value of \$41,592. Decreases in the capital asset roll forward analysis above includes the removal of these assets from the County's capital assets. As of June 30, 2013, the County had recognized approximately \$940,000 in insurance recoveries, of which approximately \$676,000 relates to County fire trucks and equipment losses, and has spent approximately \$310,000 to replace fire trucks and related equipment. The insurance recovery is presented in the Fire Coordinator's nonmajor special revenue fund as other financing source and the expenditures are presented in the same fund as part of capital outlay. Approximately \$264,000 is reflected as a liability in the Fire Coordinator's special revenue fund related to funds due to the Ekom Fire Department for loss of the building and equipment owned by the volunteer fire department.

Continuing to page thirty two (32) – Long Term Debt:

General obligation and special source bonds payable:

General obligation bonds are payable from the debt service funds. Bonds and notes payable at June 30, 2013 are comprised of the following individual issues:

	Balance June 30, 2012	Additions	Reductions	Balance June 30, 2013	Due within one year
General obligation bonds					
\$3,700,000, 1998 General Obligation Bonds, due in annual installments of \$225,000 to \$375,000 through March 1, 2013, interest at 3.75%.	\$ 375,000	\$ -	\$ 375,000	\$ -	\$ -
\$770,842, 2011 General Obligation Bonds, due in annual installments of \$256,497 to \$259,643 through March 1, 2014, interest at 1.94%	514,345	-	254,702	259,643	259,643
\$117,431, 2007 General Obligation Bonds, due in annual installments of \$14,159 through April 1, 2017, interest at 4.09%	62,910	-	11,587	51,323	12,061
\$6,400,000, 2010 General Obligation Bonds, due in annual installments of \$40,000 to \$685,000 through March 1, 2025, interest at 3.2588%.	6,285,000	-	90,000	6,195,000	55,000
Total general obligation bonds	7,237,255	-	731,289	6,505,966	326,704
Special source revenue bonds					
\$2,500,000, 2004 Special Source Bond, due in annual installments of \$179,000 to \$276,000 through June 2015, interest at 4.25%	746,000	-	241,000	505,000	249,000
\$3,000,000, 2010 Special Source Bond, due in variable annual installments based upon fee in lieu of taxes collections from the project, bearing interest at 4.85% through the maturity date of January 15, 2017	3,000,000	-	-	3,000,000	348,872
Total special source revenue bonds	3,746,000	-	241,000	3,505,000	597,872
	\$ 10,983,255	\$ -	\$ 972,289	\$ 10,010,966	\$ 924,576

Continuing to page sixty nine (69) – Auditors Report, Mr. Cooke referred to findings that will be discussed later but declared this as another report provided by the Auditing Firm towards compliance issues.

Continuing to page seventy one (71) – Federal Programs: Mr. Cooke explained that their responsibility is to express an opinion on the compliance of each federal program.

Mr. Cooke expressed finding concerns towards several areas not being maintained on the on the general ledger as follows:

Item 2013-1: County Bank Accounts Balances and Transactions Not Maintained on the County General Ledger:

Condition - Financial transactions related to Delinquent Tax Collector collection account and grant funds administered on behalf of the County by the Upper Savannah Council of Governments (USCOG) are not currently maintained in the County's accounting system. Separate bank accounts and accounting records are maintained by the above named entities, and these funds and transactions are only recorded or reported by the County at year end when summary information is received.

Criteria - The County is responsible for management and reporting on assurance that monies held by the Delinquent Tax Collector and the USCOG are being spent appropriately and transactions recorded properly.

Cause - The County has not determined the procedures needed to ensure proper recording of the above funds.

Effect - Cash balances and transactions are not recorded on the general ledger to account for funds held in the above identified accounts.

Recommendation - We recommend the identified cash accounts and related transactions be reviewed on a monthly basis by the Finance Director and that such monies and transactions be recorded in the general ledger accounts of the County, included in the restricted cash balances and related revenues and expenditures recorded in a timely manner as they occur.

Management Response - The finance director will examine this issue and determine procedures to properly record Delinquent Tax Collector account and USCOG grant fund activity on the general ledger.

Item 2013-2: County Capital Assets

Condition - The County's capital assets are maintained in a spreadsheet rather than in the capital asset module of the County's accounting software system.

Criteria - The County is responsible for safeguarding and management of its capital assets, and reporting thereon. The use of spreadsheets to maintain such records is more susceptible to errors in processing and reporting these assets.

Cause - The County has not been able to commit the staffing needed to transition to the capital asset module in its accounting software system.

Effect - Internal control over capital assets cannot be effective without maintaining accurate records of the assets held by the County.

Recommendation - We recommend the County transition to the capital asset module in its accounting software system.

Management Response - The finance director is considering the resources needed to make such a transition to the capital asset module and intends to implement when it is practical to do so.

Item 2013-3: Accounts Receivable and Revenue

Condition - Accounts receivable recorded at yearend was understated.

Criteria - The County is responsible for the completeness of its recognized revenue and accounts receivable.

Cause - The payments that were considered for accrual as accounts receivable did not represent all of the payments received subsequent to yearend.

Effect - Accounts receivable and revenues, primarily intergovernmental revenues and insurance recoveries were understated for the year, and required adjustment to reflect additional receivables.

Recommendation - Receipts of revenues subsequent to year end should be examined closely to determine the proper period in which to recognize the revenue. Procedures should be implemented to ensure that the population of such receipts is complete.

Management Response - The finance director will examine the issue and determine the needed procedures to ensure completeness of the population.

Councilman Pitts asked for Mr. Cooke to elaborate on this issue. Mr. Cooke replied, "I think it is just a communication issue of those that come in. We look though all of the receivables to justify. Maybe that process just needs to take place and charted before we actually take full documentation. Communication between the two offices needs to occur".

Councilman Tollison stated that this is the same issue we have had for several years now. Mr. Cooke replied that they have had to pick up entries before with cash receivables.

Item 2013-4: Insurance Recoveries

Condition - Insurance recoveries related to fire loss were netted against acquisitions of replacement equipment.

Criteria - Generally accepted accounting principles require that replacement of capital assets should be reported as a separate transaction from the associated insurance recovery.

Cause - The County's goal was to maintain the insurance recovery proceeds netted against the replacement acquisitions in a single balance sheet account in order to match acquisitions with funding from the insurance recovery.

Effect - Capital outlay and insurance recoveries were understated for the year.

Recommendation - The County should implement procedures to ensure that revenues are recorded in an appropriate revenue account and expenditures are recorded in an appropriate expenditure account.

Management Response - The finance director will review the procedures in place and implement the needed procedures to ensure proper recording to segregate revenues and expenditures.

Item 2013-5: Collateralization of County Deposits

Condition - At June 30, 2013 the County had a bank account with a bank balance of approximately \$725,000, for which collateral had not been pledged by the financial institution. Federal Depository Insurance Corporation (FDIC) insurance coverage of \$500,000 based on two custodians of the account, left the County exposure of uninsured and unsecured funds at approximately \$225,000.

Criteria - The County is required by the State of South Carolina to deposit County funds in accounts that are insured by Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) or collateralized by securities in the County's name.

Cause - The County opened a new bank account, and the County was unaware that the requisite collateral agreements had not been executed.

Effect - County bank deposits were exposed to uninsured and unsecured risk.

Recommendation - We recommend that the County establish procedures, including checklists if deemed appropriate, to ensure that all bank documents for new accounts are obtained and maintained in a permanent file.

Management Response - The County responded immediately to execute the collateral agreements with the bank upon discovery of the missing agreement, and the bank account was subsequently collateralized.

The monies went for a while without being collateralized. As of November, it has now been corrected but as of June 30th it was at risk.

Referring to Number one finding, Administrator Segars stated, "We have been going rounds with this for years. I want to point out that the system we have in place with the Upper Savannah Council of Governments has been used for well over thirty (30) years. There are six (6) County's in this region with over a dozen municipalities. They have had clean audits and have never had a problem with the program".

Mr. Cooke stated that the report handed out earlier to Council, talks about responsibility and what we do as the auditing firm. It also addresses accounting standards required.

Councilman Wood, referring to page thirty two (32), asked if the noted available debt limit as of June 30, 2013 of approximately \$5.9 million was less now because of recently borrowing \$3.7. Mr. Cooke replied that if was a general obligation debt it would decrease that. Chairman Coleman replied that he was of the opinion that some of the debt had rolled off during the year.

Councilman Tollison asked if general government fundif the time spent with Laurens county and the input of data contributed to that statement.

Chairman Coleman stated that if the State had funded what was expected from the Local Government Fund, it would have been a wash.

Councilman Pitts asked Mr. Cooke to address the prior year audits and what has happened since then concerning the reconciliation of accounts in CSI general ledger to the Smith Data general ledger. Mr. Cooke replied that they have found that the reconciliation from the two ledgers is being conducted daily.

As a follow up question, Councilman Pitts asked if the accounting process noted with the statement from the 2012 Audit – "We recommend management develop detailed procedures and implement processes to review the integrity of balanced funds and general ledgers, and to provide accurate, timely, quarterly financial information" – has this been accomplished? Mr. Cooke replied that to the best of his memory he felt as though it was being conducted and that he could not speak to the quarterly reporting, because they do not audit the quarterly reports.

Councilman Pitts asked what the current expenses incurred by the County with this audit. Mr. Cooke replied that he thought it to be around eighty thousand dollars (\$80,000).

Noting prior year expenses, Councilman Pitts said, "As we begin the budget process this year, we have had two (2) years now of salary increases for employees that will certainly impact the bottom line. I would like to recommend Council to go back and revisit these expenses".

Chairman Coleman thanked Mr. Cooke for the presentation and stated that the County has been frugal over the years.

RESOLUTION #2014-01 (RE: CITY OF LAURENS) - "A RESOLUTION OF LAURENS COUNTY COUNCIL TO APPLY, ASSIGN, ALLOCATE AND TRANSFER FUNDS GENERATED PURSUANT TO INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO" - COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON made the MOTION to approve Resolution #2014-01 for the allocation of

County funds to assist in the demolition process of a building on the Public Square. COUNCILMAN TOLLISON SECONDING and saying his acceptance is based on the fact that the building is a safety issue for Downtown Laurens.

Councilman Tollison asked if there was an agreement being written to document the conditions of the County allocation for assistance? Attorney Cruickshanks replied that the Laurens City Attorney is developing the Agreement for consideration by the County.

COUNCIL VOTED 7-0 to approve.

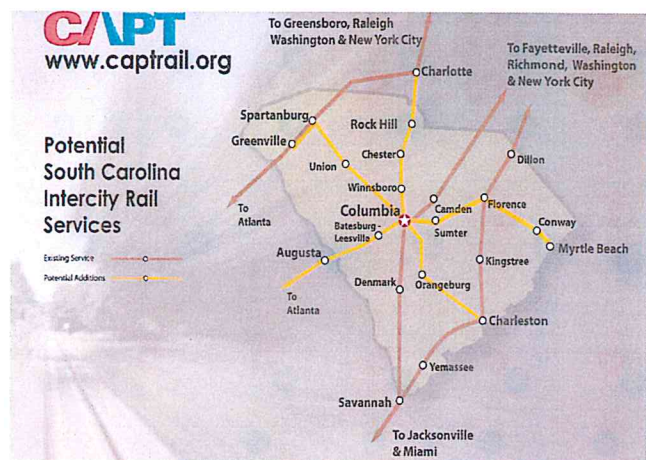
RESOLUTION #2014-02 (RE: PIEDMONT TEC – PARKING LOT) – “A RESOLUTION OF LAURENS COUNTY COUNCIL TO APPLY, ASSIGN, ALLOCATE AND TRANSFER FUNDS GENERATED PURSUANT TO INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO” - COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON made the MOTION to approve Resolution #2014-02 for the allocation of County funds to assist in the paving of a parking lot at the Piedmont Tec Center for Advanced Manufacturing in Laurens. COUNCILMAN TOLLISON SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.

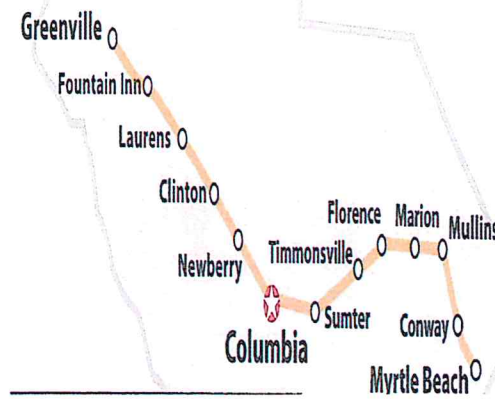
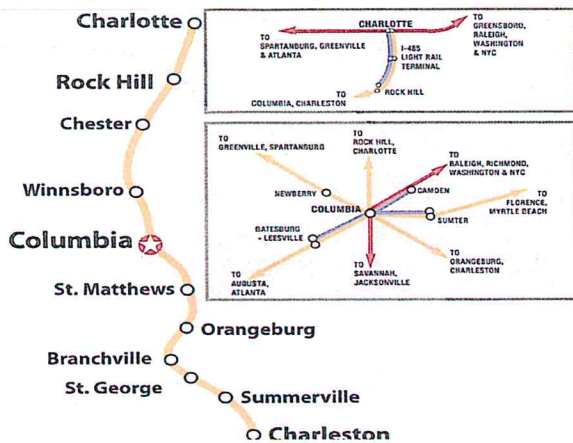
RESOLUTION #2014-03 - “A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS FOR THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA” - Mr. Phil Astwood representing the Carolinas Association For Passenger Trains briefed Council on the current standing and purpose of the Associations task.



Mr. Astwood said, "Our organization is one of over thirty (30) state or regional rail passenger organizations. We are a nonprofit corporation governed by a Board of Directors selected by its members. Our organization specifically governs within the two (2) Carolinas. We are not affiliated with any organized labor unions, Amtrak, railroads or political parties. However we are concerned with the congestion on the highways in the Carolinas due to the population and economic growth and would like to offer rail as another means of transportation along the East Coast".

Continuing, Mr. Astwood said, "A solution for this is rail passenger transportation. Each full passenger train could free up as many as sixty (60) to one hundred (100) vehicles on the highways. Passenger rail service also plays an important role in attracting economic development. The Association is working now solely on presenting the concept with the advantages and getting government agencies to adopt and support our efforts by Resolution. We have extended this same request to all South Carolina Counties and to each municipality within the County's"





VICE CHAIRMAN MCDANIEL made the MOTION to approve the Resolution as presented with COUNCILMAN TOLLISON SECONDING; VOTE 7-0

COUNCIL COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT – REVIEW OF THE REQUESTS FOR PROPOSAL TO PERFORM 2014 AUDIT – Administrator Segars informed Council that a total of ten (10) proposals had been received and that Mrs. Kirk had reviewed the proposals and will provide her findings during a Council Committee meeting that is to be scheduled. Administrator Segars recommended that the County Council Committee on Budget and Finance, along with the County Treasurer and the Finance Director be assigned this task to review and to make a recommendation to the full Council.

A date for the meeting is to be determined.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT – ERNIE SEGARS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR - Administrator Segars reminded Council of: (1) the Ethics Reports being due soon and has to be completed online; (2) Local Government Fund letter to Representative Pitts is available for signatures; (3) We have several issues related to some of the rural fire stations ISO rating needs and those stations needing repairs as there are some that are well over thirty five (35) years old and advised that the Staff is looking towards possible funding options.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Chairman Coleman opened the floor for public comments at 6:29 P.M. Having no one present wishing to address Council, Chairman Coleman closed the session at 6:30 P.M.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Vice Chairman McDaniel said, “In February, I always acknowledge the February 8, 1968 Anniversary of the Orangeburg massacre. It is known that some things change and some things don’t. In 1968 no person of color had been elected for a statewide office much less on a local level. Laurens County happens to have two (2) local officials elected. South Carolina is the only State that has a land grant college that is predominately black – South Carolina State University. In my mind, something tells me something is wrong here and as we grow and the economy changes, we still have a long way to go”.

Councilman Wood stated to the 4H Club members that were in attendance that this part of their lives is important and that they will never forget the memories created.

Councilman Nash thanked Mr. Holland for moving forward with the greenbox sticker program.

Councilman Tollison expressed his appreciation towards the teamwork between the Office of the Treasurer and the Finance Department.

As a proposal for consideration by Council, Councilman Tollison asked that Council consider moving the table presented tonight by Mr. Satterfield to the new addition of the Hillcrest Administrative Offices.

Chairman Coleman addressed the recent letter to Representative Pitts regarding the "Local Government Funds" from the State and that the same letters expressing our concerns should be sent to the full Delegation from Laurens County.

Addressing the recent bad weather conditions, Chairman Coleman said, "Making decisions to close is never an easy decision to make. I wish to publicly thank Mr. Segars for his decisions made during these conditions. And to include also those personnel from the emergency service agencies that did have to work and make their way through the ice and snow. Going these extra steps is to be commended".

ADJOURNMENT – With no further business, Chairman Coleman adjourned the meeting of Council at 6:35 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,



Betty C. Walsh
Laurens County Clerk to Council